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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/905,095	07/13/2001	Thomas R. Corrigan	56226US.002	3540

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[REDACTED] EXAMINER

VALENZA, JOSEPH E

[REDACTED] ART UNIT [REDACTED] PAPER NUMBER

3651

DATE MAILED: 01/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/905,095	CORRIGAN, THOMAS R.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Joseph Valenza	3651	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 December 2003.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-39, 50 and 51 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 4-7, 10-17, 23-26, 29-33, 35-39 and 50 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-3, 8, 9, 18-22, 27, 28 and 34 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.
 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 4-7, 10-17, 23-26, 29-33, 35-39 and 50 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in Paper No. 5.

These claims were not considered by applicant as being readable on the elected specie.

2. Claims 1-3, 8, 9, 18-22, 27, 28 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stephens in view of Lemelson or Maekawa and Ostwald.

It would have been obvious that the robots 2, 3 (or robotic arms if preferred) of Stephens could have two additional links with an end effector on the last link as taught by links 11, 15 of Lemelson or links (unnumbered vertical column on base 9 and horizontal link 5) of Maekawa. While two robots are discussed in Stephens and applicant has specified three, the number of robots has not been proven to be critical to the operation of the system and is really dependent on the number that the central controller can handle. While the shape of the path has been claimed as circular, the shape of the path has not been proven to be critical to the operation of the system and could in fact be any shape as is possible with Stephens. However, Ostwald teaches that plural robots 12 can independently travel along circular tracks 22. It would have been obvious to add this teaching to the above structure. Concerning the new limitation "a portion of two of the arms may pass through different angles, relative to the central axis, at the same point in time", the art meets this requirement. Since two (circumferentially

spaced relative to the central axis of the path) portions of the same arm have different angles, naturally two circumferentially spaced portions of different arms would have different angles. With regard to claim 18, since the robots are independently controlled, the radially adjustable third links of Lemelson or Maekawa could naturally position the end effectors at different radial distances. With regard to claims 27 and 28, the designs of the track and the drive for the first link have not been shown to be critical to the operation of the system and are considered to be functionally equivalent to the designs in the prior art.

3. This is a Request for Continued Examination of applicant's earlier Application No. 09/905095. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the earlier application and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action if they had been entered in the earlier application. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action in this case. See MPEP § 706.07(b).

Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no, however, event will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

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4. Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Joseph E. Valenza at telephone number (703) 308-2577. Amendments may be faxed to (703) 872-9306. My normal work week is Monday through Thursday.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Valenza". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Joseph" on top and "Valenza" below it, slightly overlapping.

JOSEPH E. VALENZA
PRIMARY EXAMINER